

SUMMARY OF THE OFFICE ACTION

1. OBJECTIONS TO THE SPECIFICATION

- a) The Abstract has been objected to as containing more than 150 words.
- b) An application Number on page 10, line 9 in the specification is required to be updated.
- c) An application Number on page 13, line 2 in the specification is required to be updated.
- d) Reference numbers in Figure 1 have not been defined in the specification.

2. OBJECTIONS TO THE CLAIMS

A list of 17 claim objections (a-q) has been identified.

3. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

Claims 9-10,14,18-23 and 28-32 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. A list of 9 asserted issues is given.

4. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-23 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over McCrea Jr. (US Patent No. 5,605,334) in view of Soltys (Published US Application 2003/017737).

Claims 24-26 and 28-33 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over McCrea Jr. (US Patent No. 5,605,334).

RESPONSE TO THE OBJECTIONS AND REJECTIONS

1. OBJECTIONS TO THE SPECIFICATION

- a) The Abstract has been objected to as containing more than 150 words.
- b) An application Number on page 10, line 9 in the specification is required to be updated.
- c) An application Number on page 13, line 2 in the specification is required to be updated.
- d) Reference numbers in Figure 1 have not been defined in the specification.

All issues raised under this Objection have been specifically addressed by amendments to the Specification provided herein.

2. OBJECTIONS TO THE CLAIMS

A list of 17 claim objections (a-q) has been identified.

Each requested amendment was made as specifically identified and requested. An additional clarification was made in Claim 24.

3. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

Claims 9-10, 14, 18-23 and 28-32 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. A list of 9 asserted issues is given.

Each issue raised by the Examiner has been addressed by amendments to the specific claims identified as having objectionable or unclear language. The language added to claims 20-22 is taken almost literally (with verb tense changes) from claim 1.

4. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-23 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over McCrea Jr. (US Patent No. 5,605,334) in view of Soltys (Published US Application 2003/017737). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The entire basis of the rejection operates on the following premise:

- a) McCrea somehow makes the game control aware that the hand has been completed;
- b) McCrae therefore obviously has some undisclosed mechanism for providing a signal to the game control indicating that the game is over; and
- c) Soltys shows the provision of additional cards to players;
- d) Therefore it is asserted to be obvious to actively provide a specific signal (from some point unknown and method unknown) that the hand is over.

The is rejection was in error in the original claims and is further removed from the practice of the technology claimed in the present application after the amendments to the claims.

First, McCrea does not ever specifically state that a signal is provided that the hand is over. The actual text cited (Column 9, lines 28-44) shows that the game control interrogates the system with regard to numerous results (e.g., dealer 21, progressive win; etc.). The issue of completion of a hand apparently is determined only where the dealer fails to deal additional cards (See column 9, lines 37-44). The text states:

“...and since cards are still being dealt, stage 670 is I O entered as to whether the hand is over. Again the answer is no and the dealer deals another card in stage 635 from the show 250. This process of dealing a new card and determining the delivery of the card to the correct sequential player position occurs until the hand is fully played.”

There is never any clear or specific indication of an electronic signal provided that indicates that the dealing of a partial hand or complete hands has been done. In fact, the query appears to be whether the hand is fully played, which is different from the completion of deal of partial hands or complete hands, after which the game is fully played.

The amend claim 1 even further differentiates from this already significant difference between the teachings of McCrea and the claimed subject matter by further reciting, with regard to this signal event, that the signaling event is:

by manual activation of a signal by a dealer or automatic signaling resulting from sensing of a card at a signal position

Claim 2 (and claims dependent therefrom) are specific to the automatic signaling. This feature is not shown by McCrea and/or Soltys. As the specific feature is not shown by either reference, the claimed subject matter is unobvious. The rejection is in error.

Claims 24-26 and 28-33 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over McCrea Jr. (US Patent No. 5,605,334).

Claim 24 has been amended to recite that:

“...the card delivery device in combination with a card sensor automatically providing a signal to the processor that dealing of a partial hand has been completed;...”

As noted above, the concept is absent from the teachings of McCrea. As such, the rejection is in error.

CONCLUSION

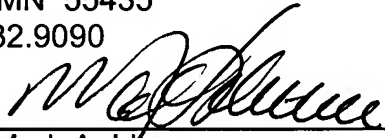
All objections and rejections have been addressed and overcome by amendment and/or argument. All claims are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner is of the opinion that issues may be discussed that can resolve any issues preventing allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to call the attorney of record at **952.832.9090** to discuss those issues.



Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 15 September 2005 By



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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this Transmittal Letter and the paper, as described herein, are being deposited in the United States Postal Service, as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop: AMENDMENT, Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on 15 September 2005.

Mark A. Litman

Name



Signature